

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 063510

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ORIGIN PRS-01

INFO OCT-01 CCO-00 SS-15 SSO-00 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 /022 R

DRAFTED BY S/PRS IPERNICK:MDK

APPROVED BY S/PRS ROBERT L. FUNSETH

S/S - FORTIZ

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO USDEL ASWAN IMMEDIATE

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TOSEC 833

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING, MARCH 20, 1975

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM S/PRS

NO. 37

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FOLLOWING IS A SUMMARY OF ACTING SPOKESMAN'S RESPONSES
TODAY:

1. SUBMARINE -- FUNSETH CONTINUED TO DECLINE TO COMMENT TO
ALL QUESTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

2. VIETNAM -- FUNSETH STATED OUR ASSESSMENT REFLECTS IN
GENERAL WHAT IS BEING REPORTED IN THE MEDIA AND BY
PRESIDENT THIEU IN HIS MARCH 20 RADIO ADDRESS (CARRIED BY
FBIS) -- VERY DIFFICULT. ASKED IF THE CURRENT ACTIVITY
COULD BE CHARACTERIZED AS A MAJOR OFFENSIVE, FUNSETH
REPLIED (THAT CERTAINLY) IT HAS BEEN CONFIRMED THAT THE
NORTH VIETNAMESE HAVE INVADED THE SOUTH IN FORCE ACROSS
THE DMZ; THEN HE REFERRED TO EARLIER COMMENTS THAT THE
ACTION APPEARS TO BE A COUNTRY-WIDE NVN OFFENSIVE. HE SAID
ADMINISTRATION BELIEVES THAT GVN URGENTLY NEEDS THE
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PAGE 02 STATE 063510

\$300 MILLION REQUESTED IN SUPPLEMENTAL AID IN ORDER TO HAVE

THE MEANS TO DEFEND ITSELF.

FUNSETH CONFIRMED THAT EIGHT OFFICIAL AMERICANS HAVE BEEN EVACUATED FROM HUE AND ARE NOW SAFELY IN DANANG. ASKED IF THE US WAS INFORMED IN ADVANCE OF SVN MILITARY MOVES IN THE NORTHERN PROVINCES, HE SAID THAT HE DID NOT BELIEVE WE WERE INFORMED IN ADVANCE. BUT THERE MAY HAVE BEEN SOME KNOWLEDGE OF SVN INTENTIONS SINCE WE EVACUATED OUR PERSONNEL.

3. DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY REGARDING VIETNAM -- HE RESPONDED TO SPECIFIC QUESTIONS THAT HE WAS UNAWARE OF EITHER: (A) MOVES TO RECONVENE THE PARIS CONFERENCE; (B) SPECIAL DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY AS A RESULT OF NVN ACTIONS; OR (C) INTENT TO RECALL THE SECRETARY TO DEAL WITH THIS PROBLEM AT HOME.

4. COMMUNIST AID TO NORTH VIETNAM -- AGAIN RESPONDING TO DIRECT QUESTIONS, HE SAID IT SEEMS OBVIOUS THAT THOSE WHO ARE ARMING NVN, TO THE EXTENT THEY ARE, ARE PERMITTING NVN TO CONDUCT PRESENT MILITARY ACTIONS IN SVN. HE REFERRED THEN TO OUR NOTE SENT TO ALL THE PARIS ACCORDS SIGNATORIES.

5. KISSINGER-GROMYKO MEETING -- NO INFORMATION TO REPORT.

INGERSOLL

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